

New LBRuT Carer's Strategy includes action for Richmond mental health carers respite

The Carers Strategy for 2013 to 2015 has been developed in partnership with local carers, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (LBRuT), Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group, The Carers Hub Service, Richmond Borough Mind, South West London & St George's Mental Health Trust (SWLSTG), Hounslow and Richmond Community Health Trust, Richmond Wellbeing Service and members of the Carers Strategy Reference Group.

Nationally we are going through a period of fundamental change in the delivery of health and social care. The Care Bill is expected to become law in April 2015. The Care Act is intended to bring new rights to carers who meet the eligibility criteria. This strategy will therefore be subject to revision in 2015 once the Care Bill and any associated funding is finalised to ensure it meets the requirements of the new legislation. Richmond Council and Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group are committed to consulting carers on the changes once they are enshrined in legislation.

Update on Carers in Mind

We are really sorry to announce that Ruth Stroud, our carers support worker, has been on indefinite carers leave since February. We are all missing her hard work and dedication to the project and I am sure you will join me in sending her our very best wishes. I would like to apologise if we are not always able to be as responsive as we would like during this period.

I would like to welcome Julie Brotherton to Carers in Mind who has joined us for 2 days a week (Monday & Friday) whilst Ruth is away. Julie is an experienced carers support worker with Richmond Carers Centre and she also has experience of working within mental health services so we are delighted she has been able to join us and would like to welcome her to the project.

We are pleased to confirm that the current strategy includes some actions which are specific to local mental health carers. These include:

- ★ The further implementation of the Triangle of Care in the community mental health teams
- ★ The incorporation of carers needs within the self directed support process, when applicable.
- ★ To assess the need for respite services.

Carers in Mind has consistently raised the lack of respite services for mental health carers with strategic partners over the last 5 years and so this is a very welcome commitment from the local authority.

However, in the current financial situation - any service developments by local commissioners require evidence and we currently have no evidence base. We have been working with LBRuT to gather evidence through a survey. To date we have only approx. 40 responses - we need a lot more than this for the evidence to be considered valid.

So we are asking you, if you support someone under SWLSTG services, please, please complete the Mental Health Carers Respite Survey! A link can be found on the front page of the RB Mind website or www.surveymonkey.com/s/CarersRespiteSurvey

**Looking for Solutions Together
Come to our mental health carers
conference for Carers Week 2014
& delicious celebration lunch!**

Friday, 13th June 12-3.30pm

**Venue: The New Pavilion, Dancer
Road, Richmond, TW9 4LB**

If you would like a copy of the newsletter in large print or you need any help accessing information from the internet - please let us know.

Concerns raised by Richmond Healthwatch following survey for CQC inspection

Following our last newsletter, which introduced the new Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection framework for mental health trusts, Richmond Healthwatch carried out a survey for Richmond service users and carers in order to gather evidence for the recent CQC inspection of South West London and St George's NHS Mental Health Trust (SWLSTG). The following extracts are from their March report:

An initial review of the data was undertaken to present themes that emerge from the responses rather than to draw conclusions. These themes are presented as the following key findings. The quantitative data presents a mix of positive and negative experiences. For the Trust overall, 36 respondents rated performance as follows:

- ★ 47% rated the Trust's responsiveness as Poor or Very Poor
- ★ 46% rated the Trust's effectiveness as Poor or Very Poor
- ★ 41% rated the Trust's safety as Poor or Very Poor
- ★ However, 56% rated the Trust positively in terms of being caring.

Comments on Adult Acute Ward

- ★ People described Lavender Ward as having high occupancy and identified this as a cause for concern.
- ★ People reported difficulties with getting admissions to Wards.
- ★ There has been considerable pressure felt relating to discharge back to the community before the patient/carer felt ready, or even if there were problems relating to housing.
- ★ Many people reported a lack of appropriate supported housing and residential care.
- ★ A shortage of Rehab beds on Phoenix was identified as a particular issue.
- ★ Most respondents described feeling unsafe on Lavender Ward and cited the high number of patients, the high levels of needs of these patients and low numbers of staff on this ward as contributing to their feelings of a lack of safety and a threat of violence.
- ★ The environment of Lavender Ward was linked as a contributing factor to feeling unsafe, particularly in areas that are not easily observed by staff.
- ★ Staffing levels on Lavender Ward were cited as a contributing factor to the other experiences of patients and

carers but also as a concern in their own right. There were mixed views about whether staffing had improved or deteriorated recently.

- ★ There was a degree of empathy in the descriptions of staff and of concern about morale.
- ★ Levels of interaction were cited by many as being low and one described Lavender Ward as being a "holding place". A lack of activities on the ward was identified as an issue.
- ★ People reported difficulty in being able to communicate with staff due to a lack of staff numbers.
- ★ Some people reported receiving good care.
- ★ Phoenix Ward was identified as providing good care.
- ★ Some people referred to terms like abuse, threatening and breaches of human rights to describe care.
- ★ A few comments describe experiences of care where they felt staff were lacking in their "duty of care" in relation to suicidal thoughts, enforced treatment without informing them first or where their dignity was not protected.

Comments on the Adult CMHTs

- ★ There were concerns about high turnover of staff, high numbers of agency staff being used and insufficient numbers of staff.
- ★ Comments made in relation to the staff were generally very positive, particularly describing staff as caring and identifying individuals as having had a significant positive impact on people's care. Long term continuity of care by the same staff was very beneficial and key in maintaining good health.
- ★ Positive comments did not extend to agency staff: agency staff were viewed as less caring and less easy to communicate with.
- ★ A key theme running across those who had experienced community care was concern about being discharged too soon and about not being accepted to the service soon enough or facing challenges to getting care when they started to become unwell again. Some people describe this as leading to a "revolving door" of entering and exiting care.
- ★ Some people reported problems with communication with, and difficulty accessing Community Psychiatric Nurses, key workers and social workers.
- ★ There were also a number of concerns expressed about access to care in a crisis with the Crisis and Home Treatment Team being viewed as difficult to access or as not providing the help people felt that they needed.
- ★ Some people described the environment at Richmond Royal as feeling unwelcoming, "like a prison" and difficult to navigate.

The full report is available on the Richmond Healthwatch website.

MAY SERVICES UPDATE....

Following this report from Richmond Healthwatch we are aware of some significant developments in the last 6/8 weeks showing how the services provided by SWLSTG are responding to feedback from Richmond service users and carers.

Changes on Lavender Ward There have recently been some major changes to Lavender Ward with the recruitment of a new consultant, Khaldoon Ahmed, and a new ward manager, Collen Baffana. We hear there have been significant improvements to the atmosphere, environment and bed occupancy levels. Safety has also been bolstered, particularly by altering the way in which services care for clients with Personality Disorders. The ward has managed to considerably reduce the need for agency staff through improved management and recruitment. At the last Richmond Stakeholder meeting in April, SWLSTG committed to the reintroduction of the Acute Care Forum for Lavender Ward which was disbanded in September 2013.

Community Team developments The adult community redesign detailed in our January newsletter continues but the time schedule has altered a little. The current plans are for all community staff to be located at the Richmond Royal hub in June when the new functional teams will start to become operational. As part of the current redesign in community services the Trust has met with service user representatives to look at ways of improving the environment at Richmond Royal Hospital from a service user's perspective.

Zoe Mears has been appointed as the interim Associate Director of Social Care for Richmond. This appointment will help to improve access to a variety of services and also lead to greater integration of services related to social care including housing, direct payments and carer assessments. SWLSTG is also working with the local commissioners to look at ways of improving the rehabilitation services model.

Senior Staff Changes Update Sarah Haspel was seconded to another role in the Trust in March and as an interim arrangement, David Bullivent is working as the Director for Richmond and Kingston (R&K) SWLSTG mental health services. Two new permanent Operations Managers have been appointed, Shurland Wilson for R&K Community Services and Beverley Baldwin for R&K Acute Services - they will be joining the Trust during May and June. Sharon Spain has been promoted to a lead nursing role in the Trust and we now have a new permanent Modern Matron for R&K, Sharon Putt.

NEW! Service User and Carer feedback opportunities

At the SWLSTG Carers, Families and Friends Reference Group I have found that senior managers are genuinely committed to improving the opportunities for people who use the Trust's services to influence service developments and to challenge the Trust to continue to improve the quality of care they deliver. There are a number of new initiatives for service users and carers, families and friends to offer quick opinions on SWLSTG services and they will help the Trust to stay permanently abreast of patients' opinions on how they are performing - please use!!

Real Time Feedback (RTF) kiosks are available on Lavender Ward. RTF has recently been upgraded so that the form is easier to complete and it has also been rolled out further so that service users in community services can access it in addition to inpatients. An online version (<https://feedback.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk>) is now available, service users and carers can access this via an icon on ward computers, as well as from the internet at home, or at the library.

Patient Opinion is an independent online resource through which service users and carers can express a view of a service. SWLSTG are able to learn from that opinion and offer responses where appropriate. This can be accessed from the Patient Opinion website and searching for the South West London & St George's pages which are read and responded to by the SWLSTG Patient Experience Team.

SWLSTG Patient Advice and Liaison service (PALs) offers confidential advice, support and information for service users and carers, families and friends. PALs can support people with any problems or concerns with the aim of reaching a practical solution whenever possible. They can also give information about how to make a formal complaint and give advice on getting independent help to do this if that would be helpful. Tel: 020 3513 6554 Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

Richmond SURG Re-launched! We are pleased to announce, following carer feedback on the lack of involvement opportunities for local service users, that the Richmond SWLSTG Service Users' Reference Group (SURG) was re-launched in March. The new SURG group has already met and the members will be working with SWLSTG to ensure that Richmond service users views are central in the development of local services.

Kim Willson

All Party Parliamentary Group on Mental Health: Report on Mental Health Emergency Care

The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Mental Health is a group of MPs and Peers from across political parties who come together to discuss mental health. The group recently gathered written evidence on the state of emergency care. This the Executive Summary:

The APPG on Mental Health received an overwhelming response to its call for written evidence on emergency mental health care. 315 respondents with a wide range of experiences - including people with mental health problems, carers, family members, professionals and the police – came forward to provide honest and often harrowing accounts of the emergency care they had experienced or witnessed.

The evidence shows that there are pockets of good emergency mental health care across the country. Many respondents described instances of high-quality social care professionals and police officers going to great lengths to ensure an individual in crisis received the care they needed – but all too often the professional was often themselves battling against overstretched services and little to refer into or on to.

What is clear is that there are major inconsistencies in the standards and processes of how emergency care is planned and delivered. Services and staff are overstretched and there is a lack of acute beds and services. This is resulting in many people - often in life-threatening situations - not receiving appropriate emergency care. There are a huge number of stories of individuals at serious risk to themselves or others being turned away from services, or experiencing long waits at a police station, rather than a health-based place of safety, at A & E or for their crisis team, and subsequently being discharged without treatment.

People are experiencing a post-code lottery; services in some areas are easy to access and quick to assess and refer, but in some areas such services appear to be non-existent or inaccessible. It is also clear there are no obvious routes into care. Some people are admitted, some are taken to police cells, some people are told to see their GP, some are seen by a crisis team, some face long waits in A & E, and some are told to go home. Each story is different. It is a very confusing space. This is an unacceptable situation, and would never be tolerated for physical health emergency care.

What next? The APPG is encouraged that the Department of Health recently published the **'Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat'**. While some organisations have committed to making dramatic improvements, in order to ensure people receive the care and support they need,

this plan needs to be adopted by leaders in communities across England.

The full report is available on the Rethink Mental Illness Campaign webpage for the APPG. This page also has a report on 'Reducing premature mortality for people with mental health problems' and a current survey for service users and carers which will be used as evidence for their report on 'Mental wellbeing as a public health priority'.

NEW! Advice Services

2013 saw additional major Government changes to welfare provision. This included the introduction of a cap on benefits, a charge for under occupancy of social housing and changes to the Council Tax Benefit system. RB Mind are aware that this causes particular difficulty for people with mental health problems and carers, many of whom have raised concerns with the Service User Forum and through carers forums within the borough. RB Mind have been working with Richmond upon Thames Council and other partners to improve access to advice services which offer vital support to residents affected by welfare reform.

Richmond Council Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Cllr David Marlow, said: *"Ensuring vulnerable residents get the right care and support is a top priority for the Council, and never more so than in these difficult financial times. The services launched are part of the jigsaw in making sure our residents get good care and support. The Council is committed to funding these and similar services into the future and we are fortunate to have such excellent voluntary sector partners who deliver outstanding work to support residents within the borough."*

The following services are now available through RB Mind. **Services for RB Mind Service Users only:**

Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) surgery

RCAB are offering a fortnightly drop-in for members of the Wellbeing Centre and the Peer Network, every other Tuesday from 11.30am-1pm at the Wellbeing Centre. This offers general advice in a range of areas including debt, housing and consumer problems.

POhWER Advocacy POhWER offers weekly drop-in support for members of the Wellbeing Centre and the Peer Network, every other Monday at the Wellbeing Centre. Advocates help people understand their rights and the options open to them and help them speak up and have their voice heard.

Services for RB Mind Service Users and Carers:

Welfare Benefits Advice Free Welfare Benefits Advice Sessions provided by Advice Richmond in partnership with RB Mind, 1st & 3rd Wednesday afternoon of every month at Bridge House, 69 London Road, Twickenham. By appointment only: email info@rbmind.org or call 0203 513 3404 to book.